

BOARD OF SELECTMEN 2014 ANNUAL REPORT

To the Citizens of Ashburnham:

Following the April Election the makeup of the Board stayed the same and it was voted to continue with Leo Janssens as Chairman and Nick Davis as Clerk. Duncan Phyfe remained as third member.

One of the biggest issues facing the Town was the proposal of a pipeline to transport natural gas through Town. There was a large public outcry and the Board voted to rescind its permission to allow surveying of Town-owned property. The Selectmen held a public meeting where Kinder Morgan (the company proposing the pipeline) spoke on the proposed pipeline. A number of questions submitted by residents were asked along with a number of questions from the floor. The meeting only served to raise more questions. At the time of this writing the pipeline route has been changed to an area outside of Ashburnham.

At the annual town meeting we saw the failure to pass funding for a new DPW facility. There was further discussion regarding the tax rate being one of the higher in the state. I want to remind everyone that, yes, the rate is high but the actual tax bills are in the middle compared to the rest of the state. I also would like to point out all money spent has to be voted by the Town, be it town meeting or in the case of exempted borrowing a ballot vote at an election.

In time for Memorial Day a rotary was constructed at the entrance of New Cemetery. The flagpole was moved from the VMS to this location. This really improved the area and made for a nice entrance. It also served as the area used during the Memorial Day Parade.

In June Cushing Academy again renewed their commitment to fully fund a police officer position until June 2017.

In July we said goodbye to Chief Paul Zbikowski after thirty-six years of service on the Fire Department. We wish him well in his retirement.

In October we welcomed Captain Paul Rekos Sr. as our new Fire Chief and we look forward to seeing the Department continue its move forward as firefighting evolves to new levels.

In November we said goodbye to Deputy Chief Jerry Descoteaux and we wish him well in his retirement.

As usual the most complaints I receive as a Selectman are the condition of the roads. In the past year Hastings Road and East Rindge Road were resurfaced. We continue to upgrade roads and our Highway Superintendent and Town Administrator keep a list based on priority. I want to thank everyone for appropriating money each year to continue this process. I would also like to add since the conception of the Capital Planning Committee all of the Chapter 90 money goes to roads.

We also saw the upgrade to the water line on Williams Road and this spring we will be seeing the road upgraded.

At this time I want to thank all of our employees, committee and board members. Our employees are always there for us and during negotiations never have outlandish requests. Our committee and board members serve on a voluntary basis. It's people who make a community and I urge everyone to become involved by voting, attending Town Meeting or joining a board or committee.

Respectfully submitted,

Nick Davis

Leo Janssens II

Duncan Phyfe